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RR RUEHWEB

DE RUEHYE #0273 1131541
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 231541Z APR 09
FM AMEMBASSY YEREVAN
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 8957
INFO RUEHKB/AMEMBASSY BAKU 1159

UNCLAS YEREVAN 000273

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PBTS](#) [OPDC](#) [AJ](#) [AM](#)

SUBJECT: DE FACTO NAGORNO-KARABAKH AUTHORITIES SEND LETTER
TO DRL A/S STEWART ON NK CHARACTERIZATION IN THE HUMAN
RIGHTS REPORT

¶1. The Embassy received the following letter in English from the "Foreign Minister" of the self-proclaimed "Nagorno-Karabakh Republic" addressed to DRL A/S Stewart regarding the latest State Department human rights report.

¶2. VERBATIM TEXT OF "NKR" LETTER (AS RECEIVED):

Dear Ambassador Stewart:

The people and the government of the Nagorno Karabakh Republic (NKR) appreciate and welcome the U.S. championship in establishing true democratic principles throughout the world. The people of Nagorno Karabakh share the ideas of democracy and we remain determined to continue building a strong democratic state for the benefit of all nations in the region.

The annual Country Reports by your Bureau usually portray a balanced approach to existing challenges in foreign countries, objectively assessing main problems in relation to human rights and democratic development. We consider these reports to be reputable documents by the State Department, which must contain well-grounded and objective information on human rights situation in different parts of the world. Unfortunately, your most recent, 2008 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, particularly in its parts concerning Armenia and Azerbaijan, contains inaccurate information which may lead to wrong and biased understanding of the essence, as well as the cause and consequences of the Azerbaijan)NKR conflict.

It is with profound disappointment that we noticed a continued distortion of the Nagorno Karabakh problem. The reports on Armenia and Azerbaijan, unfortunately, failed once again to consider the whole complex of facts and preconditions for the current situation in the region. The one-sided language in the Human Rights report utterly disregards the opinion and the will of the people residing in the Nagorno Karabakh Republic itself - a people that were subjected to aggression by Azerbaijan for trying to exercise their right to live in freedom under the government of their own choosing. We are convinced that the use of phrases like "ethnic Armenian separatists" to describe the NKR people, who sacrificed immensely for their freedom, as well as many other unacceptable definitions and numbers are clearly the result of Azerbaijan's anti-Armenian propaganda, and therefore must be excluded from the report language since they undermine the spirit and the goals of your Bureau's activity.

The formation of the Nagorno Karabakh Republic in 1991 was conducted in full compliance with then-acting Soviet legislation and norms of the international law, and was called to rectify Joseph Stalin's arbitrary decision to place this ancient Armenian territory under Soviet Azerbaijan's rule. Seven decades of Soviet Azerbaijan's administrative rule resulted in sharp shift of the demographic situation in Nagorno Karabakh, accompanied with dozens of killings and oppression of the local Armenian population. All this, along with the Azerbaijani manner of dealing with any expression of the free will, prove the righteousness of our decision, and also show the

impossibility of a peaceful co-existence of Azeris and Armenians within a common administrative entity. Since day one of its proclamation, the Nagorno Karabakh Republic embarked on the path towards building an independent, democratic state, which can guarantee its citizens their rights and freedom. Several rounds of elections on all levels, assessed by international observers as free and transparent, as well as effective governance within its borders make the NKR one of the very few viable states in our part of the world where democratic processes have become irreversible.

We highly appreciate the continued U.S. efforts as a co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group to facilitate finding a lasting and just solution to the Nagorno Karabakh's conflict with Azerbaijan. We realize that the settlement process is a very difficult challenge, and thus have repeatedly affirmed our readiness to work closely with international mediators towards establishing peace and stability in the South Caucasus.

For these reasons, we respectfully request that you review the language and the essence of the official report of the U.S. State Department where it relates to Nagorno Karabakh. A balanced and objective report could promote the U.S. mediation efforts and contribute to establishing confidence among the conflicting sides.

Sincerely,
Georgy Petrossian, Minister
YOVANOVITCH